

alliance, the purpose of which is to disclose to the Germans of the Ost Mark the blessings of the Reformation, has remarkably enough received government sanction. The way is preparing for great mass movements. These will come. This it is which ultramontaniam fears and seeks to ward off with Leuger's Christian Socialist Party and other devices.

The words of the poet Grillparzer are often quoted: 'Had we Austrians had a two-hundred-year-long Protestant history, so had we with our gifts been the most capable of all of German stock. But instead we have had the Jesuits and all we have produced is music and concordats.' The mud wasp captures but does not kill its victims. It paralyzes them with its sting and keeps them for months living but torpid and unable to stir, walled up in its mud nest. And this is what 'the great persecuting order,' as Lecky calls it, has done to Austrian intelligence and Austrian talent and Austrian religion.

But a new day is whitening the East."

## Sunday School

### PAUL'S INSTRUCTIONS TO THE THESSALONIANS.

1 Thess. 5:12-24.

Lesson for August 8, 1909.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good."—1 Thessa. 5:15.

#### DAILY HOME READINGS.

M.—1 Thess. 5:12-24. T.—Heb. 13:7-17.  
W.—2 Thess. 3:6-16. Th.—Rom. 12:10-21.  
F.—Luke 18:1-8. S.—Isa. 25:1-9.  
S.—Phil. 4:1-9.

#### TOPICAL OUTLINE.

##### A Summary of Christian Duty—

Of pastors and people, vs. 12, 13.  
Duties toward others, vs. 14, 15.  
Personal holiness, vs. 16-24.

#### SHORTER CATECHISM.

Q. 67. Which is the sixth commandment?

A. The sixth commandment is, "Thou shalt not kill."

#### LESSON COMMENT.

It was while at Corinth amid his secular and spiritual labors, that Paul wrote the first of his epistles to the churches which he had established. In Acts 18:5, we read of Silas and Timothy coming to Corinth from the Macedonian churches, and in 1 Thess. 3:6 we find that the report that he brought was highly favorable. He brought good tidings of their faith and charity and their good remembrance of Paul and their desire to see him. The report was such as to comfort Paul in the troubles which he was encountering at Corinth. In 2:17, Paul speaks of himself as only taken from them for a short time and that he was still contemplating a return to their city. Thus this epistle is the first in time of all Paul's letters. It was written probably in the winter of 52 A. D. and the second epistle was written but a short time after the first, while Silas, Paul and Timothy were still in company and while the same condition of affairs existed in the Thessalonian Church that existed when the first epistle was written.

There were certain faults existing in the church and the purpose of the letter was to correct these and exhort the Christians to a more perfect obedience. During Paul's stay in this city, he had dwelt much upon the kingdom of God and the second coming of Christ. After his departure, the church dwelt too exclusively upon this doctrine which made them neglect present duties; forsaking their work and perhaps giving up their secular business that they might attend exclusively to religious matters. They thought that it was little use to labor with their hands if the second coming of Christ was imminent.

Some had lost relatives by death and they were disturbed as to their estate and their part in the blessing that would follow Christ's coming, thinking that those who were found

alive at that time would have more of the blessing than those who were asleep.

In the fifth chapter there is an intimation that some of them had sinned against chastity and sobriety and also charity. (5:7; 4:3, 5:15). There were also manifestations of insubordination toward their spiritual rulers (5:12, 13) and symptoms of contempt of spiritual gifts of prophesying. (5:19, 20.)

It is also worthy of note that in these two epistles there is not a single quotation from the Old Testament, which would lead us to believe that the church at Thessalonica was composed mostly of Gentiles.

In this epistle there is none of the doctrinal arguments that we find in most of Paul's writings, for example, in Galatians and Romans. As yet there were no deadly errors to call forth this style of writing. The epistles deal largely with the moral and practical side of the Christian life.

This epistle was a joint letter from Paul, Silas, and Timothy, and all three ministers discussed the various evils to be corrected and the various admonitions to be given.

We can imagine the joy with which this epistle was received at Thessalonica. There was a strong bond of affection between the Apostle and these brethren, and a letter from him was an event in the life of the church. They no doubt obeyed his injunction to read the epistle to all the holy brethren.

It was not long after this letter was sent, that Paul found it necessary to write them again. The excitement about the second advent had increased rather than diminished, and the more fanatical part of the congregation were using Paul's words to increase it. While Paul may have expected the second coming in his generation, he was not misled into deducing erroneous conclusions from his belief. Those who were stirring up this excitement claimed to have special revelation of the Spirit and also used a letter which they claimed to be from Paul. (2 Thess. 2:2). In this second epistle, he reminds them of certain signs which must precede the second advent, which signs would be easily discerned and which had not yet been seen. This second chapter of the second letter is rather obscure to us, but was well understood by the Thessalonians. 2 Thess. 2:5 tells us that Paul had told them these things while he was yet with them and had fully explained them. This probably explains the obscurity which perplexes us now.

These two epistles were the beginning of a series of letters which Paul wrote to the churches and which have been of inestimable benefit to the churches throughout all ages. Had Paul not written these, the church would have been deprived of authoritative teaching on some of the most vital doctrines of religion. Not only are these epistles valuable for their doctrinal teaching but afford allusions to current events in the church and give us occasional glimpses of the foremost Christian workers of that day.

By his correspondence the Apostle was able to multiply his work and retain an oversight of the teaching in all the churches with which he was in communication. By these letters he being dead, yet speaketh, and to some extent, we of the present day can partake of the Apostle's ministrations along with the Macedonians, Corinthians and Ephesians.

We must remember also, that these letters were written by a busy man, perhaps dictated while he was sewing the rough tent cloth, or after the day's labor when he was in weariness of the body. With our greater facilities for correspondence, we ought to use the privilege as Paul did, for the extension of the gospel. Much pastoral work that can not be done in person can be done with pen and paper, and many a soul that is deprived of the services of the church or pastor can be reached by our mail facilities.

"The wind that blows can never kill

The tree God plans;

It bloweth east, it bloweth west;

The tender leaves have little rest,

But any wind that blows is best.

The tree God plants

Strikes deeper root, grows higher still,

Spreads wider boughs, for God's good will

Meets all its wants."

—The Interior.